

REVIEW: TRIUMPH ROCKET III

REVIEW BY HEIN JONKER

When you see this beast rolling up from behind you, pull off and pay respect to the most powerful stock cruiser on the road to date. To quote Ian Marsh in saying: "When this passes you it is like a block of flats rolling by ..." Everyone talks about how light-weight their bikes are, but this is just the opposite, weighing in at 320kg, with pistons the same size as the Dodge Viper's and the crank-shaft at only 17kgs.

The incredible 2.3litre, in-line, water-cooled, 3-cylinder engine means it can accelerate like a rocket without any effort. Despite all of this the Rocket III is super smooth with low centre of gravity making it a breeze to handle at slow speed.

Transmission is smooth but solid with a shaft drive at the end which is very suitable for a powerful bike that it is and the added benefit high durability and hardly any maintenance.

The brakes consist of twin 4-piston calipers on a 320mm disc in the front, built to sports bike specs, and a single 2-piston caliper, developed by Brembo, on a 316mm disc in the rear.

Fuel is supplied by a Fuel Injection System, from a 24litre tank, with two butterfly valves per throttle body giving precise over the engine and allows the ECU to vary mixture flow which is dependent on the selected gear and speed. The torque curve is thus tailored for each gear ratio and the result ... over 90% of the Rocket III's torque is available at 2000rpm (200Nm @ 2500rpm), a Rocket indeed. Oh, I forgot to mention, the Rocket III comes with a free membership to Virgin Active 'because strong hands and arms are what you'll need to stay on this machine.

Holding all of this is a large tubular steel twin-spine frame with 43mm upside down forks and spring loaded adjustable twin rear shocks. Everything on this bike depicts sheer size even the tyres; a 150mm front and a very wide 240mm rear wrapped around 5-spoke cast aluminium wheels.

Riding the Rocket III offers comfort for both the rider and pillion, than handlebars are placed in a position suitable for most riders but you need to be sure you are holding on tight, because of the huge thrust when letting it rip right through all the gears, you better brace yourself before you do. Don't be amazed by the natural laughter after such a spurt, it's addictive and lots of fun. Ground clearance is good by cruiser standards, and the bike's steering feel is far from vague. In tight, high-speed cornering the Rocket III is occasionally more exciting than it ought to be.

Triumph spent a lot of time and effort on detail, there is just nothing they have not thought of and it doesn't stop there, they also have a vast amount of accessories available you can fit.

Who Needs it?

Anyone who can afford it should have one, the Rocket III will set you apart from the rest, there is just nothing like it. It is the kind of bike that'll put a thrill in your ride every time, giving birth to the beast in you. Be prepared for the ride of your life...

Price

R169 500 Incl. VAT



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